

NIEHS postdoc lands big pharma job in Europe

By Vijay More

In February, former NIEHS trainee Christopher Campos, Ph.D., began work as a trainee scientist at the Hoffman-La Roche World Headquarters in Basel, Switzerland. After five years in the NIEHS [Intracellular Regulation Group](#), led by David Miller, Ph.D., Campos accepted a position that focuses on biomolecular drug delivery to the brain.

Novel work and specialized training

According to Campos, a novel aspect of his work in the Signal Transduction Laboratory involved establishing a protocol for isolating rodent spinal cord capillaries. He also described the first molecular signaling mechanism for transporter regulation at the blood-spinal cord barrier. Campos said his specialized training in rodent carotid artery cannulation, which allows for use of radioactive tracers to study the brain's uptake of drugs, earned him several coauthor publications and helped him land the job at Roche. As a postdoctoral fellow at NIEHS, Campos published nine papers, and he has five more in the pipeline.

"Chris has been one of the most interesting trainees in my lab," said Miller. "He functioned as a technical wizard, improving existing procedures and developing new ones. He took full advantage of the opportunities that NIEHS and the [Research Triangle Park] area had to offer."

While still a trainee, Campos presented invited talks at the Gordon Research Conference for Barriers of the CNS, in 2012 and 2014. In addition, he won a Fellows Award for Research Excellence, also known as a FARE award.

Beyond the lab

Campos was involved beyond his own lab as well. "The best thing about working at NIEHS is the ample exposure to a variety of science, through seminars from internal and external speakers," Campos said. He encourages fellows to attend more talks organized by the institute. "Even if they appear less relevant to your own work, they develop your aptitude as a comprehensive scientist," he said.

As a social chair for the NIEHS Trainees Assembly, he organized special events, including the annual trainee dinner, the Chinese New Year celebration, and the monthly fellows happy hour. He also planned informal meetings between postdoctoral fellows at local universities to foster regional networking and research collaborations.

Campos also suggested fellows take advantage of local networking opportunities, including [Triangle Biotech Tuesdays](#)

(<http://www.trianglebiotechtuesdays.com/>)

and [RTP180](#)

(<http://www.rtp.org/program/rtp-180/>)

. And he credited his resume and interview preparation sessions with Tammy Collins, Ph.D., head of the NIEHS Office of Fellows' Career Development, and Denise Saunders, Ph.D., career counselor with the National Institutes of Health [Office of Intramural Training and Education](#)

(<https://www.training.nih.gov/>)

for vital assistance in his job search.

"I firmly believe that in today's job market, networking is almost as essential as publishing papers for a postdoctoral fellow," Campos said.

(Vijay More, Ph.D., is a visiting fellow in the NIEHS Intracellular Regulation Group.)



In addition to conducting his own research, Campos trained more than 10 postbaccalaureate and postdoctoral fellows during his fellowship. (Photo courtesy of Christopher Campos)

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(bruskec@niehs.nih.gov)

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